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GWAII HAANAS

HAIDA HERITAGE SITE & NATIONAL PARK RESERVE



A Pacific coast wilderness in Haida

Gwaii – the Queen Charlotte Islands.

*Protected through the cooperation of
the Government of Canada and the
Council of the Haida Nation*

PUBLIC PLANNING PROGRAM

VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

NEWSLETTER N° 2

APRIL 1994

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Produced by the
ARCHIPELAGO
MANAGEMENT
BOARD

A response sheet is included with this newsletter.

Offert en français

A NOTE FROM THE ARCHIPELAGO MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Gwaii Haanas Agreement between Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation established the Archipelago Management Board (AMB) as responsible for planning, operations and management in Gwaii Haanas. The AMB's four members provide equal representation from the Council of the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada.

The AMB is pleased to present this second Gwaii Haanas planning newsletter. We thank the individuals and organizations that took the time to comment on the first newsletter. Your responses have been useful in helping us to revise the Purpose & Objectives Statement and to develop a draft Vision Statement and a set of Guiding Principles for management.

The AMB is required to work within the legal restrictions and political commitments contained in the South Moresby Agreement and the Gwaii Haanas Agreement. It is beyond our mandate to respond to comments and suggestions which fall outside these parameters, such as the land ownership dispute. This matter will be dealt with by the Council of the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada through the British Columbia Treaty Commission.

On the other hand, comments on the issue of traditional resource use by the Haida have provided an opportunity for the AMB to clarify that, in Gwaii Haanas, we recognize that human beings are a part of the ecosystem. Understanding how we can live in a balanced and respectful relationship with nature is a significant element of our draft Vision and Guiding Principles.

The AMB is planning a series of community information sessions over the next few months to obtain public comments on the draft Vision and Guiding Principles. The board is also open to meet with any individuals or groups that have special concerns. We value your involvement. It helps us to determine how we should manage the area, not only for today, but for future generations.

We appreciate and thank the individuals and groups who responded to the first planning newsletter, and we encourage more people to become involved.

How-a. Thank you.

BUILDING THE PLAN

THE PLANNING PROGRAM

The goal of this planning process is to produce a Strategic Management Plan that will guide the AMB's management and operations in Gwaii Haanas. The diagram at right depicts the steps in the process and highlights our current position with the draft Vision and Guiding Principles in this, the second planning newsletter.

The Purpose & Objectives Statement explains the rationale for protecting Gwaii Haanas and defines long term management objectives. Revisions based on public comments have been made and are presented in a summary beginning on page 10 of this newsletter.

The Vision Statement articulates a future for Gwaii Haanas to which all parties may aspire. The draft Vision Statement presented in this newsletter is based on suggestions received in the first stage of public review. Following the next round of public comments, a revised Vision Statement will be incorporated into the draft Strategic Management Plan.

The Guiding Principles will provide the AMB with concise guidelines for making decisions regarding management and operations in Gwaii Haanas. They are based on safeguarding the values for which Gwaii Haanas has been protected and on achieving the qualities and aspirations expressed in the Vision Statement. After reviewing public comments on the draft Guiding Principles presented in this newsletter, a revised set of principles will be incorporated into the draft Strategic Management Plan.

The Strategic Management Plan will combine all of these components to provide the AMB with a comprehensive framework for on-going planning, management and operations. Following our consideration of public responses to this newsletter, a draft will be prepared and circulated for public review.

The AMB will be able to make the best use of your comments if they are received before June 1, 1994. Please send them to:

Archipelago Management Board
PO Box 909
Queen Charlotte City, BC
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PHONE: (604) 559-6304
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PUBLIC INPUT

In Newsletter 1, the AMB released the draft Purpose & Objectives Statement for public review. We also asked people to describe their long term vision for Gwaii Haanas and to comment on management issues. The newsletter was sent to all addresses on the Islands and to all persons and organizations in Canada that had expressed an interest in the planning program. Responses came from the Islands and elsewhere in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain.

This second newsletter summarizes comments received on the Purpose & Objectives Statement, presents the AMB's responses and revisions, and provides a sample of the vision statements received. Public comments on management issues were analyzed by the AMB and are reflected in the draft Guiding Principles.



COMMENTS ON THE PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES STATEMENT

The AMB received numerous comments on the Purpose & Objective Statement, samples of which are presented below.

“I support the partnership between the Haida Nation and Government of Canada on co-management. I support the goal of protecting and sustaining the cultural natural heritage. My sons have both grown up on the islands. It is their home. I hope their children will experience this natural heritage.”

“What makes this project so exciting and hopefully a model for such ecological/culture parks planning elsewhere is that it is a joint effort between the Haida people and the Government of Canada. The statement seems quite comprehensive and covers the issues that are most important to me.”

“I agree with the intent and stress that both parties must have equal representation and authority.”

“How is the activity of sports fisheries compatible when conservation and protection of the marine environment is the primary goal?”

“Is Parks Canada only purpose as stated: ‘The fundamental goal of Canada’s national parks system is to protect and conserve representative examples of 39 terrestrial and 29 marine natural regions within Canada?’ Or does Parks Canada have other purposes?”

“As far as we are aware the rate of logging in the Queen Charlotte Islands has actually declined in the past ten years and it is not correct to suggest that the logging is at an accelerated rate.”

"I think there is need for a stronger statement regarding the understanding and maintenance of biological and ecological processes."

"I would like to see a partnership between the school district and the AMB to utilize Parks resources to develop educational programs regarding Gwaii Haanas and to share 'new understandings' with island students."

AMB RESPONSE:

Most of the comments we received expressed general support for the statement. Some respondents suggested revisions, which we found helped to strengthen and clarify the document. Some changes were made, and are presented in a summary of the Purpose & Objectives Statement on page 10 of this newsletter.

The final version of the statement – including the revised introduction – will be presented with the draft Strategic Management Plan in the next planning newsletter. In the meantime, copies of the full text are available upon request.

Place Names

The use of Haida place names by the AMB was put forward as an issue. A few respondents to the newsletter expressed concerns that Haida names could result in confusion about geographic location.

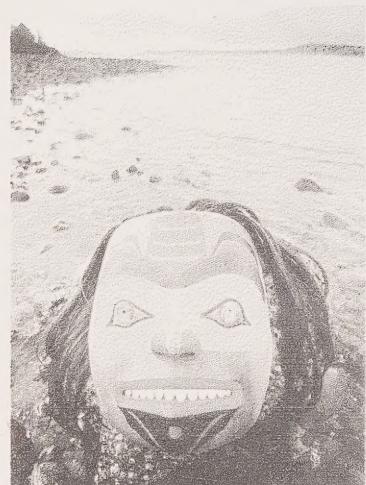
"The exclusion of names such as Queen Charlotte Islands and South Moresby is myopic and does not serve the cause of input by the public, which knows the area by these names."

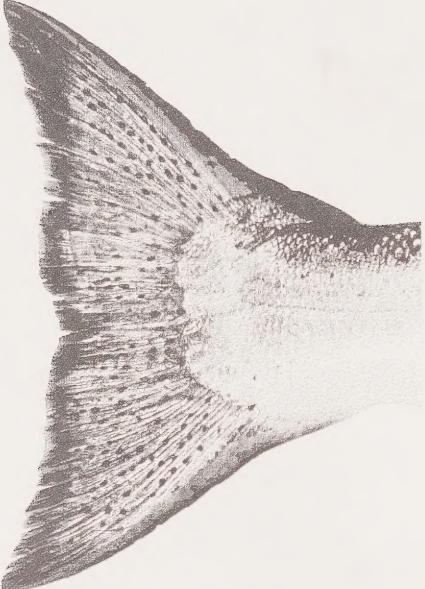
AMB RESPONSE:

The term "South Moresby" was coined during the struggle to protect the southern portion of Moresby Island – it was never a gazetted name. The name Gwaii Haanas has been adopted by the Council of the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada as the formal name because it better reflects the special natural qualities and the Haida heritage values of the area.

To many people, Haida names enhance the experience and express the Haida connection to the area. This view was supported in a recent survey in which many visitors commented that they would like to see more use of Haida place names and explanation of their meanings. The AMB is compiling information about original Haida names and is standardizing the linguistics.

Safety and communications are primary management concerns. Any changes that may be made will be well publicized, and maps will be updated to ensure that there is no confusion regarding geographic references.





Commercial Fishing

Concern has been raised about the impact of the commercial fishery on the marine ecosystem.

“To allow commercial fishery (would create) impacts on (the) marine ecosystem – directly on the number of fish, indirectly on sea mammals, eagles, seabirds, bears etc. I suggest that in order to meet the first objective of preservation and conservation, commercial fishing within Gwaii Haanas must be stopped.”

AMB RESPONSE:

Management of the Gwaii Haanas marine area will take place within the parameters of current policy, political agreements and aboriginal rights. Future management and policies will be shaped by the completion of negotiations and the definition of strategies for the marine protected area. Under current arrangements, commercial fishing and certain recreational fishing will be permitted. All uses will be subject to environmental assessment and scientific evaluation for protection and sustainability.

Post-European History

Some respondents believe that post-European history, including industrial activities, should have more emphasis in the Purpose & Objectives Statement.

“Why, in five years, has no effort been made ‘to preserve and present the evidence of post-contact history (white) in the area?’ Lockeport, Jedway, Ikeda, Rose Harbour are quite as interesting as the Haida Villages.”

AMB RESPONSE:

Our goal is to manage the cultural heritage of Gwaii Haanas based on the principles of respect, integrity, and understanding of intrinsic values. These principles apply to both Haida cultural heritage and post-contact heritage sites.

Over the last three years we have been conducting an archaeological inventory of Gwaii Haanas, which includes post-contact heritage sites. The post-contact history is an important and interesting aspect of the human history in the area. We have produced a manuscript on the history of Gwaii Haanas since European contact. It is now available through our library and will be used to develop future interpretive programming.

In some cases, the evidence of post-contact history consists of the remains of resource extraction industries, for example: the mine tailings at Jedway or logging sites on Lyell Island. In cases where health, safety or ecosystem integrity is a concern, the AMB favours the rehabilitation of sites.

Traditional Resource Harvesting

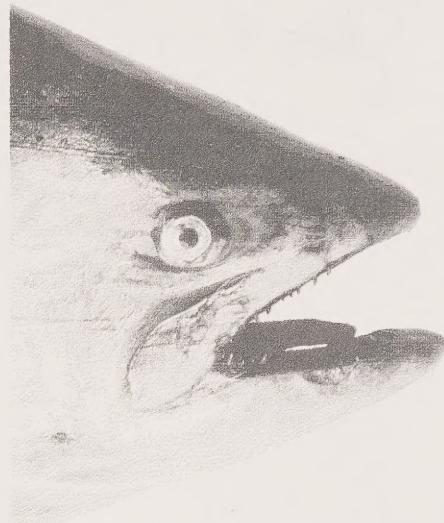
A few respondents questioned the concept of Haida traditional resource harvesting activities and the use of modern means to hunt in Gwaii Haanas.

"The concept of allowing a special group of people special privileges (Haida) to hunt non-traditional game (deer) with non-traditional weapons (guns) with non-traditional means of transportation (mechanized vehicles) in a federal park is totally incredible. I feel this activity is totally unacceptable."

AMB RESPONSE:

The Gwaii Haanas Heritage Site designation by the Council of the Haida Nation was made in part to assert and protect the continuing aboriginal rights of the Haida. The Canadian Constitution recognizes and affirms existing aboriginal rights, and the Supreme Court of Canada has confirmed that aboriginal hunting and fishing rights are not restricted as to method or means.

In Gwaii Haanas, we recognize that human beings are an integral part of the ecosystem. In accordance with the Gwaii Haanas Agreement, Haida cultural activities and traditional resource harvesting will continue in a sustainable manner.



COMMENTS ON THE MANAGEMENT ISSUES

In Newsletter 1, the AMB presented a list of issues that we think should be considered in developing the Strategic Management Plan and asked for comments. Almost every issue was discussed by respondents. Identification and clarification of these issues has assisted the AMB in developing the draft Vision Statement and Guiding Principles presented later in this newsletter.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE VISION STATEMENT

In Newsletter 1, the AMB also asked for descriptions of what Gwaii Haanas should be like in the future, as the basis for drafting the Vision Statement. The following examples indicate the diversity of ideas that we received.

"Gwaii Haanas would be:

- a world class protected area that demonstrates the ability to sustain the existing dynamic ecosystem that includes humans as part of the system;
- an area for the productive interchange of cultural philosophy (indigenous and non-indigenous) with regard to sharing these environs between humans and non-humans;
- a protected area excluding extractive activities;

- an eventual plan to incorporate both marine and terrestrial environs;
- a protected area that provides an opportunity for visitors to gain an understanding of traditional land use;
- an area for respectful, reciprocal interface between humans and non-humans;
- a protected area contribution towards adequate representation within the ecoregion;
- visitor facilities and activities that are in harmony with the intrinsic nature of the environs.”

“My vision of Gwaii Haanas then is as a core wilderness area of the Queen Charlotte Islands where motorized traffic is severely limited if not prohibited in order to preserve the spiritual as well as physical aspects of the area and that the Watchmen program continues to slowly unfold in Gwaii Haanas in a way that does not compromise the wilderness values which have been eroded in recent years.”

“My vision is an archipelago where the natural world is predominant in every experience of the visitor. If this vision is adopted, I would see its implementation including restrictions on the scale and intrusiveness of visiting vessels and aircraft, e.g. no 1,000-passenger cruise ships, no private helicopters. In addition, it would be in conformity with the objective of providing visitor services, administration etc. outside the archipelago boundaries.”

“Don’t change it by adding facilities and services. It should not become a ‘Park’ with signs and outhouses. The lack of signs of authority while camping in Gwaii Haanas allows me to feel the full impact of all the features of the archipelago; it won’t feel like wilderness as soon as there are signs, arrows and designated campsites. Off-island friends have echoed this after being in Gwaii Haanas. I would not want to see it become like other national parks such as Banff. Wardens and other evidence of the authority of Parks Canada are unnecessary and very inappropriate for this area.”

“My own vision of Gwaii Haanas for the future is that it will be a splendid example of an integrated relationship between a culture in harmony with the natural world and a living example of that relationship. It will be a place that integrates the ecological, the cultural and the spiritual aspects of life. It will be a place that offers opportunities for understanding of and an appreciation for these aspects of life as seen in the relationship between the Haida people and their culture with the natural world.”



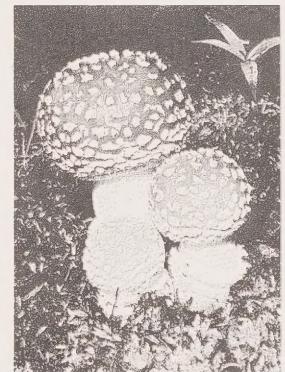
"Maintain the area as a wilderness destination. Restrict economic development based on the needs of the Haida Nation. Provide a somewhat improved infrastructure:

- for tourism i.e. more information and destinations within the park, a controlled fuel supply dock about half way down, some campsites;
- development of a central education site from which study groups could be based with priorities for local students."

"I envision a mountain trail from north to south. From this trail, branch trails will connect up eastward and westward to significant points of interest. Because of the extreme difficulty of hiking in this country, it is unlikely that there will be an excess of people wishing to attempt it. My vision is therefore stated above – with the addition of about a dozen safe accesses and egresses for kayaks and small boats."

"My view of the park for the future is to have designated campsites set up in low impact areas. Keeping commercial groups and individual groups separated. Or not having any more than a certain number to be defined at a later date. Visitor services should be developed at the entrance to the park (e.g. campground, amphitheatre promoting the cultural and geographical landscape)."

"If there is ever to be an improvement in the Queen Charlotte Islands economy, the number of visitors must be increased dramatically. We believe that the Archipelago Management Board should focus on ways to increase the number of visitors. To attract visitors, good facilities should be located inside the park. The park area is huge and reasonably sensitive development can be completed within the reserve in sheltered areas. Permanent camping areas should be designated in order to minimize environmental problems related to visitors."



AMB RESPONSE:

The variety of ideas that we received range from a protected wilderness, to an area with limited infrastructure, to an area with extensive facilities, to increasing numbers of visitors. It appears that most people think Gwaii Haanas should be a place where people can understand the inseparable bond that the Haida have with this area and create their own connection to Gwaii Haanas. This opportunity should be available to our generation and to future generations.

In summary, there is general consensus on the need to preserve natural areas and wilderness qualities, and to protect cultural sites and values. The AMB is confident that realization of these two principle visions will produce the greatest long term environmental and social benefits to the Islands.

VISION STATEMENT

FIRST DRAFT



A vision statement should set out a future target for all parties to aspire to. A shared vision will help the AMB to focus its planning, management and operations, and will facilitate closer cooperation and working relationships with those who care for and use the area. The vision will also acknowledge the unique co-management arrangement that exists between the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada.

The following draft presents in point form the key elements of the Vision Statement, based on the Gwaii Haanas Agreement, the Purpose & Objectives Statement, and public suggestions received to date. Please review it and provide us with your comments on the attached response sheet.

In the future, Gwaii Haanas will be:

- a protected area with a naturally evolving and healthy environment. Gwaii Haanas will sustain its diversity of species, ecological integrity and cultural heritage.
- a protected area which continues to make a vital contribution to the continuity of Haida culture.
- a protected area which is identified as a place that provides opportunities to appreciate unique natural and cultural heritage values, to become spiritually connected in a quiet wilderness setting, and to participate in challenging outdoor activities in a marine and terrestrial setting.
- a protected area maintained through an applied science program that provides the information base for understanding and protection of its cultural heritage and its terrestrial and marine environments. The program will include monitoring ecosystem processes and changes, levels of impact, effectiveness of management activities, and the requirements of users.
- a protected area with an informed, involved and committed network of support. A knowledgeable public will practice appropriate uses within Gwaii Haanas and will support its continued well-being.
- a protected area with a holistic, cooperative and integrated co-management approach. The AMB will promote a shared approach to planning, management and operation, based on involving all those affecting the Gwaii Haanas ecosystem within the context of the broader Islands ecosystem.
- a protected area which provides a model of a respectful relationship between human beings and the earth, a place where people come to learn about a way of living in which humans are not dominant, but are a part of nature. Gwaii Haanas will be key to enhancing an appreciation of Haida culture through the provision of appropriate programs.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

FIRST DRAFT

The draft Guiding Principles are intended to define the standards for the planning, management and operation of Gwaii Haanas, and to provide the framework for decision-making. Please let us know whether you agree with them or have any other principles that you think should be added.

CO-MANAGEMENT & CONSENSUS

The Haida Nation and the Canadian Parks Service will share in the planning, operation and management of Gwaii Haanas. Decisions will be made by consensus, based on available scientific and traditional knowledge.

PROTECTION & INTEGRITY

The highest management standards will be applied to protect the integrity of the ecological and cultural heritage of Gwaii Haanas.

CULTURAL CONTINUITY

Haida culture is the traditional relationship of Haida people to Haida Gwaii. Haida cultural activities and traditional renewable resource harvesting are natural parts of the ecosystem and will continue in Gwaii Haanas in a sustainable manner.

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN/LAND RELATIONSHIPS

Gwaii Haanas should continue to inspire an understanding and appreciation of the relationship of human beings with the natural world.

SPIRIT

Gwaii Haanas will be respected as a source of spiritual inspiration.

STEWARDSHIP

Sound environmental ethics and practices will be advocated and applied in all activities.

RESEARCH & SCIENCE

Gwaii Haanas provides a benchmark for science and human understanding. Scientific research, monitoring and analysis will be fundamental tools for management.

APPROPRIATE USES

Visitor uses will be managed to protect the special features and integrity of ecosystems, cultural heritage, and the wilderness experience.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Opportunities will be provided to the public to contribute their knowledge and suggestions on planning and management practices.

WORKING TOGETHER

Collaborative and cooperative working relationships will be employed to achieve management objectives.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Archipelago Management Board is accountable to the Council of the Haida Nation and the Government of Canada for the application of, and adherence to, these principles.



PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES STATEMENT

PURPOSE

Through cooperative planning and management, the interests of the Government of Canada and the Council of the Haida Nation can be accommodated, ensuring the protection for all time of:

- largely intact representative ecosystems which sustain biodiversity within the terrestrial and marine areas;
- a heartland of Haida culture, with evidence of habitation by a people with an advanced social and economic structure, living in harmony with the natural environment for thousands of years, and where living Haida culture and traditional activities can continue to evolve in a natural setting;
- a natural area of significance that provides excellent representation of the terrestrial Pacific Coast Mountains Natural Region;
- plants and animals important to science for the study of adaptation and evolution; and,
- post-contact heritage including the evidence of historical and industrial era sites;
- an outstanding natural and cultural heritage area where public understanding, appreciation and enjoyment are permitted in a manner that leaves the area unimpaired for this and future generations..

SUMMARY

This is a summary of the main points of the revised Purpose & Objectives Statement. The entire text, including the revised introduction, will be presented in the next planning newsletter. In the meantime, the full text is available on request.

OBJECTIVES

Terrestrial Area

Objectives for the terrestrial area are:

- to protect for all time the natural heritage representative of the Pacific Coast Mountains Natural Region, including diverse ecological systems and processes ranging from old growth coastal rain forests to the alpine meadows of the San Christovals;
- to preserve and develop in-depth understandings of the Archipelago's unique genetic values, which may include more than 40 endemic and disjunct species or subspecies of plants and animals;
- to control introduced species in the Archipelago in order to minimize their impact on the indigenous species and their habitats;
- to protect the internationally significant natural aspects of the Archipelago, including high concentrations of bald eagles and Peale's peregrine falcons, seabird nesting colonies, and an extraordinary diversity of mosses, liverworts and other plants;
- to manage visitors and minimize their impacts on the Archipelago's environment in order to ensure the maintenance of ecological integrity; and,
- to allow areas modified by resource extraction to recover to as natural a state as possible, and to assist the process with rehabilitation where necessary.

Marine Area

Objectives for the marine area are:

- to protect and conserve for all time the natural heritage representative of the east and west coasts of the Archipelago marine regions, including the diverse marine habitats and life processes found in intertidal areas, shallow to deep pelagic waters, and on the ocean floor;
- to protect the globally significant marine flora and fauna (and their habitat) of the Archipelago, including high concentrations of seabirds and Steller sea lions;
- to recognize and ensure continuation of the integral relationship between the marine environment and the Haida; and,
- to cooperatively protect, conserve and manage the marine environment of the Archipelago, while allowing certain sustainable fisheries to continue.





Haida Heritage

Objectives relating to Haida cultural heritage are:

- to recognize the integral relationship of Haida culture with the natural world and to contribute to the continuity and enhancement of that culture;
- to protect the evidence of the cultural heritage of the Haida as exemplified by the World Heritage Site at Sgan Gwaii (Ninstints), and the hundreds of other Haida archaeological and historic sites in the Archipelago; and,
- to provide opportunities for guests to understand and appreciate the historical relationship of the Haida people with the natural environment, and the Haida ideals for living on the earth.

Post-Contact Heritage

Objectives relating to the historical and industrial era are:

- to manage historical and industrial era sites in accordance with sound cultural heritage management principles and practices;
- to preserve and present the evidence of post-contact history in the area;
- to encourage recovery of sites adversely and significantly impacted by industrial activities; and,
- to consider historic value in all actions affecting the management, recovery and environmental quality of historical and industrial era sites.

Appreciation, Understanding & Enjoyment

Objectives for appreciation, understanding and enjoyment are:

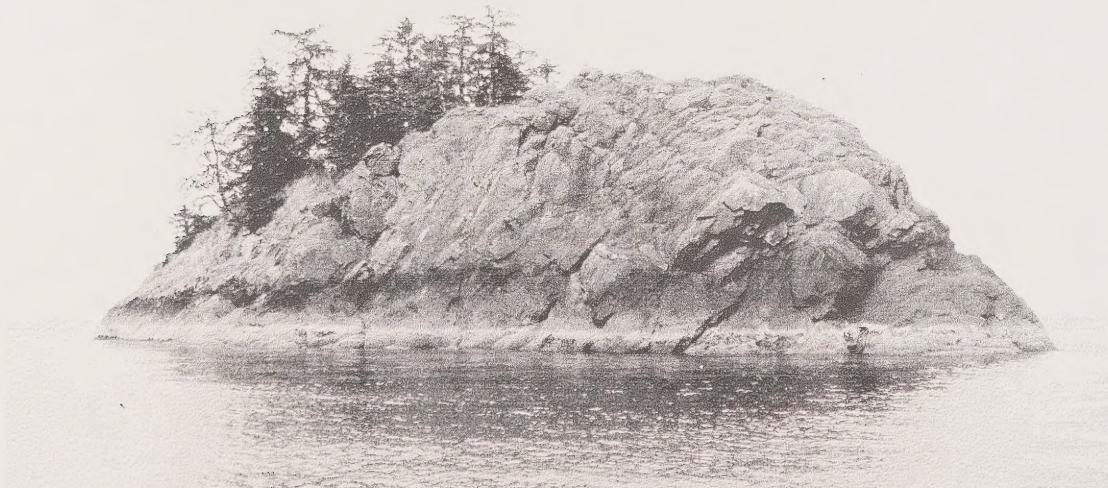
- to harmonize visitor use of the Archipelago with Haida cultural activities;
- to provide a limited range of visitor facilities for wilderness opportunities in a manner than does not impair natural and cultural values;
- to ensure the safe and appropriate use of the area by visitors;
- to provide heritage interpretation and broader environmental education messages that focus on the protected area's contribution to maintaining ecological integrity, and to promote a philosophy of environmental stewardship;
- to use Gwaii Haanas as a place which provides educational opportunities for understanding the human-land relationship;

- to provide innovative Archipelago-related environmental education and heritage interpretation programs to those who may not be able to visit the Archipelago itself; and,
- to provide, where appropriate, visitor services, administration and maintenance facilities outside the boundaries of the Archipelago in a manner that enhances local participation and benefits.

Partnership & Regional Integration

Objectives for partnership and regional integration are:

- to ensure that the planning and implementation of an economic development strategy for the Islands is complementary to the objectives of the Archipelago and the area's unique natural and cultural character;
- to maintain a close liaison with local and regional communities to ensure their continued involvement in the Archipelago;
- to promote and provide opportunities for local communities to derive social and economic benefits from the operation of the Archipelago as a protected area;
- to ensure that the Archipelago is appreciated and is relevant to the residents of the Islands; and,
- to develop partnerships and cooperative strategies for enhancing scientific research, resource management, environmental education and tourism within the region in a manner compatible with the purpose and objectives for the Archipelago.



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Our next step is to obtain comments on the Vision Statement and the Guiding Principles. Your input will help us to finalize these important products. Whether you can attend one of the on-Island community information sessions or not, please use the enclosed response sheet. We can make best use of your comments if they are received by June 1.

The final stage of the planning program will be production of the draft Strategic Management Plan, which will include the complete Purpose & Objectives Statement, the Vision Statement and Guiding Principles, and a description of the tactical directions we will be taking to implement the plan. In Newsletter 3, you will have an opportunity to comment on the entire package.

